

NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP MEETING SUMMARY

**North Seattle Community College
ED 2843A in the Dr. Peter Ku Education Building
Tuesday, February 1, 2005, 4:05 pm – 7:00 pm**

The Northgate Stakeholders Group (Group) held its eleventh meeting at North Seattle Community College on Tuesday, February 1, 2005 from 4:05 pm to 7:00 pm. The purposes of the meeting were to:

- Approve meeting summary #10 and review the future schedule of Stakeholder Group meetings;
- Review reports from the Design Review Subcommittee and results of analysis from SPU and Simon on options for natural drainage at Northgate Mall;
- Hear and discuss a presentation on the Lorig development proposal for South Lot, including contract rezone requests; and
- Complete deliberation and finalize advice on the planning, financial and technical assumptions to be used in the Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP).

Welcome

Welcome, Vice Chair Michelle Rupp

In the absence of Ron LaFayette (Chair), Vice Chair Michelle Rupp convened the meeting at 4:05 PM. She welcomed the Stakeholders to their eleventh meeting. She also introduced the new member for the youth seat, Amanda Doty, who is a student at Middle College and in the Running Start program at North Seattle Community College (NSCC). After briefly reviewing the agenda for the meeting, Ms. Rupp called on David Harrison, the meeting facilitator, for a report of discussion he and Alice Shorett had had with Stakeholders Janice Camp, Barbara Maxwell, and Ron LaFayette in on December 15.

Facilitator's Report of Discussion with Stakeholders

Mr. Harrison described the discussion as an opportunity for a mid-course review of the facilitation process and an opportunity to "take the temperature" of the Group. While he said there appeared to be general comfort with the nature of the facilitation, he indicated two issues that had emerged. The first related to the fact that Simon had requested design departures after the Group had finalized its advice on the Simon development proposal for Northgate, so the Stakeholders had not known of or been able to consider and comment on these requested departures in their advice. The second was a concern that the agendas of Stakeholders Group meetings were too closely tied to the City Council resolutions that created the Stakeholders Group. Stakeholders requested hearing about the multitude of issues in the Northgate area so they could ask questions and offer comments. In response, he said, the facilitators had proposed beginning each meeting with a "Northgate Revitalization Project

Status Report” from the City, the first of which Jackie Kirn, of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) would provide at this meeting.

Northgate Revitalization Project Status Report

Jackie Kirn referred the Stakeholders to a handout in their packets, entitled Northgate Revitalization Project Status Report, dated February 1, 2005. This report presented information about 11 different activities or projects that are in various stages of planning or implementation in the Northgate area. The report described current activities and expectations for the following:

- South Lot, including the Thornton Creek project, in relation to the Lorig Project; the Lorig Project in relation to the King County Transit-Oriented Development (KC TOD); proposed shared parking between Lorig and King County; preliminary design for 3rd Ave NE (sidewalks and adjacent areas); and pedestrian connections between the Lorig Project, KC TOD, South Lot, the Mall, and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Seattle Public Utilities’ purchase of 2.7 acres of South Lot for the Thornton Creek Channel and work to be carried out in phase one, the first of three phases
- Northgate Mall Redevelopment: Permit application expected in early March; transportation analysis underway
- Northgate Library, Park and Community Center: request for proposals issued with responses due in February; depending on the outcome, groundbreaking possible in mid March;
- A proposed Northgate Technical Design Workshop, hosted by the Department of Planning and Development and tentatively scheduled in March, to coordinate design (pedestrian connections, lighting, signage, art), start to unify the way Northgate looks and create cohesiveness among the eight construction projects that are possible in the next few years. Participants would include Simon, SDOT, SPU, Lorig and NSCC as well as volunteers from the Stakeholders Group. It was later recommended that Sound Transit be invited even though it has no near-term projects.
- Sound Transit: Two station locations to be studied and a public meeting on February 24
- Seattle Monorail: A Monorail representative to give an update on extending the system later in the meeting
- 5th Ave NE Street Improvements Project: project coordination underway with Northgate mall consultants; report from Sandra Woods expected at February 24 meeting
- Pedestrian connection between Northgate North (Target) and Northgate Mall: Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) working on this; Simon consultant looking for operational options for improvements; results to feed into (CTIP)
- Northgate Neighborhood Arts Council: Lorna Mrachek reported 40 people interested in the Council; the Council sponsoring the premiere of a play, “Another Day in Bagdad” about the lives of American soldiers in Iraq (at NSCC on February 19), and working on a Farmers’ Market; on a related matter, Jackie Kirn mentioned that the City hoped to have something to share at the March 8 Community Forum about the Arts Plan that Benson Shaw is developing
- Maple Leaf Community Garden: Barbara Maxwell reported on a grant funding request and contracting with a landscape designer. Lorna Mrachek reported that Pinehurst was at a similar stage in planning a park.

Upcoming Stakeholders Group Meeting Schedule

Ms. Rupp called attention to the following meeting dates and topics:

- February 24: Stakeholders Group meeting -- Lorig Proposal
- March 8: Community Forum -- CTIP update, Lorig proposal and South Lot coordination advice
- March 15: Stakeholders Group meeting -- Finalize advice on Lorig proposal and South Lot coordination
- March 22: CTIP Subcommittee – Evaluation criteria, future conditions/opportunities
- April 12: CTIP Subcommittee – Approve findings, evaluation criteria, future conditions/opportunities

Meeting Summary Approval

The draft summary of the November 18 Stakeholders Group meeting was approved as written.

Northgate Mall Development Proposal

Ms. Rupp reported that the Design Review Subcommittee had met before both the December and January Design Review meetings. She noted that the Design Review Board seemed to have been impressed by the comments and the strong participation of Stakeholders at both meetings. She also said that Stakeholders would appreciate not being “surprised” by last minute “departure” requests at future Design Review meetings.

Natural Drainage Options at Northgate Mall

Miranda Maupin (Seattle Public Utilities, SPU) referred Stakeholders to a two-page report in their packets, entitled, “Northgate Mall Case Study: An Evaluation of Natural Drainage for Parking Lot Development.” After briefly reviewing the alternatives considered and the process by which the analysis had been done, she said that SPU had concluded that bioswales and porous paving in the parking lot were both feasible and could “provide additional drainage and aesthetic benefits not realized by a traditional code compliance approach.” She indicated that Simon was interested in moving forward with this approach.

In response to a Stakeholders question about details or technical conclusions, Ms. Maupin indicated that SPU had not gone into great detail because it was in an advisory role. She said that SPU had developed concepts and handed them over to Simon.

In response to a question about where drainage from the bioswales would go, Gary Weber of Simon said he did not have details but he understood that the approach would have provision for a 100-year storm and that water would generally filtrate down into groundwater.

In response to a question about whether any thought had been given to combining pedestrian walkways with bioswales, Mr. Weber said he did not think pedestrian access had been incorporated into the swales. Ms. Maupin indicated there was no way to let pedestrians into the swales, given the design. In response to a question about the use of pervious pavers, Mr. Weber said he believed they were part of pedestrian plazas.

A member asked if he had understood correctly that the “landscaped” aspect of the pedestrian walkways was being waived and the landscaping was being provided instead by the swales. He said that the swales could have been designed with more pedestrian access.

Mr. Weber referenced a handout in the members’ packets entitled, “Progress Report on Simon Northgate Mall Expansion Project.” He said that Simon had applied for two design departures: one concerning the size of parking spaces (asking for more full size spaces relative to compact car spaces) and a second concerning pedestrian walkways. A member of the Design Review Subcommittee noted that the Subcommittee had requested more pedestrian access, including a protected walkway into the mall, in addition to the two walkways called for in the code, but the Design Review Board did not ask for that so it would be up to Simon to respond.

Mr. Weber pointed out that summaries of the December 6 and January 3 Design Review meetings were included in their packets. He reported that the Design Review Board had adopted all of the recommendations made by the Stakeholders in their advice.

Several members of the Design Review Subcommittee said that it would have been helpful for the Stakeholders as a group to have known about and discussed the requested “design departures,” especially those that related to pedestrian connections, in advance of finalizing advice and participating in the Design Review meetings.

Next Steps

Mr. Weber said that Simon expected to apply for a Master Use Permit in early March. He said Simon would also apply for a demolition permit for the Medical Building and the Theater. The actual work might occur in the first quarter of 2006, to avoid demolition during the holidays. In closing, he said that Simon and its consultants had heard the Group’s input on pedestrian access and, given the site constraints and topography, they were working diligently to develop a strong plan in that regard.

The Lorig Proposal for South Lot

Before Bruce Lorig presented his proposal for the “North Commons” project, Jackie Kirn briefly

- Provided the context for the presentation by reviewing the legislative background to the North Commons/Thornton Creek Channel project (summarized in a handout in the members’ packets) and noted that a representative of the Central Council staff would report on the Council’s role at the February 24 Stakeholders Group meeting,
- Described a preliminary schedule and timeline, including the expected schedule for design and construction of the Thornton Creek Channel,
- Described the information that would be presented at this meeting, including contract rezoning requests related to building height and parking space requirements, and
- Asked Stakeholders to identify issues where they needed additional information so it could be brought to the next Stakeholders Group meeting.

Bruce Lorig said the goal of his presentation was to share his vision for the project and to indicate the changes needed in the City's code for the project to go forward. He began by identifying the partners he has worked with, including Jackie Kirn of OPM, SPU (in designing the water course), King County Metro (on shared parking) and ERA Care Communities.

ERA Care Retirement Housing

He then introduced Eli Almo of ERA Care Communities that builds retirement housing with both independent and assisted living units. Mr. Almo noted that ERA Care owns a number of retirement facilities, including two Ida Culver Houses and two University Houses (in Issaquah and in Wallingford). He said that his facilities typically draw their residents from the surrounding three miles. The ERA Care project is proposed to be three to four stories in height, located in the southeast corner of South Lot, across the water channel from Northgate Commons. In response to a question, he indicated that ERA was planning for 125 apartments. (Additional information about ERA Care was provided in a handout in the members' packets.)

Northgate Commons

Mr. Lorig indicated that the City had bought 2.8 acres of South Lot. After Lorig purchases its part, he said, the City and Lorig have an agreement to trade, so that each ends up with the same land area but reconfigured to allow the Thornton Creek Water Channel. In addition, he said that Lorig would give the city 32 to 34 feet to build half of the new 3rd Ave; King County/Metro would provide the remaining half. In addition Lorig would give a little land to allow 103rd to be widened for buses.

He said that the project includes about 400 apartments (30% affordable; the remainder at market rate) and 78 townhouses that would be sold as condominiums. He said that no regular on-street parking was planned. All parking would be below ground with the exception one continuous sidewalk that would allow short-term parking for unloading heavy items. Handouts showed a diagram of the proposed land transfer, a site plan, a section drawing, a massing study, and streetscape views from outside the Commons and from various perspectives within, building height sections, shared parking summary, and potential departures that Lorig might request.

Mr. Lorig said that the two contract rezone requests related to building height and parking space requirements would have to go through the City Council for approval. He said he was hoping for Stakeholders Group support for the contract rezone requests.

With respect to building height, he said they would seek a uniform height of 85 feet, which would be an increase on the east side and a decrease on the west side. This change was needed because of the slope down to the water channel.

With respect to parking, he said the City's code required 740 spaces. By sharing parking with King County/Metro, Lorig was proposing to build about 180 spaces fewer or a total of 560. The cost of the 180 spaces was \$4.5 million. Without the rezone, he said the project would not be viable.

Questions and Comments

David Harrison then facilitated questions and comments, to flag issues where the Group wanted more information as well as matters of special interest. He said he expected the discussions on February 24 to focus on the two contract rezone requests.

In response to a question about the Park & Ride Lot at 5th Ave NE and NE 112th, Ron Posthuma pointed to information in a handout that showed anticipated parking spaces lost as 3rd Ave. NE was built and as east-west pedestrian access to the Transit Center was provided. He noted that King County/Metro was in discussions with Simon about adding a floor to the Northgate mall parking garage. He said that shared-use stalls would make it easier to give up the Park & Ride at 5th Ave. NE and NE 112th. He said King County/Metro would be happy to give it up sooner if that were possible.

A member indicated that the Stakeholders would be interested in the provisions for stormwater at the Commons. Mr. Lorig said that he was aware of that interest but that he had no details at that time. Another member recommended that members visit two developments that use natural drainage concepts: the Evergreen School in Shoreline and the “Reserve” near the Mill Creek Town Center.

When asked when natural drainage issues would be addressed during the design process, Jackie Kirn said that they came later, but she also recalled that the City Council had set a goal of natural drainage and said that SPU was expected to work with Lorig in the same fashion as it had with Simon. She encouraged the Stakeholders to flag key issues so, at a minimum, the Group would have gone on record.

After complimenting the renditions and the connections they showed to the neighborhoods, a member asked why the baselines for parking demand differed between weekdays and weekends; she also asked how ERA shared parking fit in. In response, Mr. Lorig said that they assumed that some residents would leave for the weekend, that the condos would have their own parking as would ERA Care, and that the rest of the parking would be shared.

In response to a question about the assumption that between 100 and 150 cars would leave the site daily, Mr. Lorig said that it was based on the experience at a number of facilities elsewhere, given access to transit and Flexcar use. In response to a question about what would happen if those assumptions were wrong, he offered to bring additional data on February 24 to show the basis for the assumptions.

When asked if the departure request for a blank façade applied to a specific area or throughout, Mr. Lorig indicated that it would apply on 103rd, although without a design, he said he couldn't give a firm answer. The member requested that future renderings show the heights from outside, on a human-scale, as if a person were entering the site, to give a sense of whether or not the buildings might present a “wall” to the outside.

A member requested information about curb cuts and sidewalk widths expected on the new 3rd Ave NE and the widening of NE 103rd and encouraged giving the “extra edge” to pedestrians rather than to cars, to make it safe and pleasant for pedestrians. With access to the

garage at NE 104th, she said it was important to look via CTIP at how the garage could affect traffic flows and access.

In response to a question, Mr. Lorig said he thought the profile of residents at Northgate Commons would be primarily adults because of the size of the apartments (mostly two bedrooms) and the fact that there wasn't adequate play space for children. He said there would be a range of incomes, with the condos and some apartments at market rate and 30% of the apartments at affordable rates.

In concluding the discussion, the facilitator noted that the Stakeholders would have to design the advice in recognition that some of the advice would precede the design. He encouraged Stakeholders to send questions and issues in advance of the next meeting so they could be addressed at the next meeting.

Discussion of Draft CTIP Advice

Following a 10-minute break, the group reconvened to review the planning, financing and technical assumptions for CTIP and the draft advice that had been sent to the Group in advance. Tony Mazzella of SDOT first addressed the issue of parking. He highlighted three points in the study approach. He said that CTIP would

- Look at parking in the context of a community served by transit;
- Address the issue of parking spillover into the neighborhoods; and
- Help to manage parking to serve all the users and refrain from increasing the number of single-occupant vehicles.

Mr. Mazzella then introduced Meghan Shepherd, Transportation Planner in SDOT's Parking Management Section, who is to work on parking issues. Ms. Shepherd indicated that, in carrying out the study, her team would gather and review existing information (codes and policies; case studies, existing parking and travel information, census data and expected projects). In addition, she said they would also gather new data, including conducting parking studies at sample areas. Then, she said they would generate a range of results and scenarios. She said she would return on February 24 with more information.

Mr. Mazzella noted that the members' packets included a report of the Planning, Financing, and Technical Assumptions for CTIP that had been developed over the course of three meetings with the CTIP Subcommittee. His presentation slides (included in member packets) highlighted key findings. He said he was proposing one change to the report, on p. 13, to lower the benchmark for speeds to the legal limit (25 mph on non-arterials). Another change was a correction on p.2 of the draft advice: it should read 700 cars per day rather than 600 cars per hour.

In response to a suggestion that streets with sidewalks and streets without sidewalks should have different standards, Mr. Mazzella indicated that CTIP would look at streets with a variety of characteristics, not just speed and volume.

A member pointed out that the Northgate Comprehensive Plan and its EIS highlighted the significance of traffic coming from the west (Wallingford and NE 85th west of I-5). She expressed concern that the study seemed to be inordinately focused on Northgate east of I-5 at the expense of the Northgate area to the west. Another member concurred and urged that the study include that connection. In response Mr. Mazzella said that SDOT had decided that NE 85th west of I-5 was its own study and required resources SDOT did not have. Instead SDOT had decided to focus on how traffic from 85th impacted the study area.

A member thanked Mr. Mazzella for adding in nearby urban villages (page 2). She asked about looking at the Lake City Plan. Mr. Mazzella replied that he had looked at it and where streets overlapped, he was incorporating them.

Another member expressed satisfaction that Mr. Mazzella now favored the 25 mph benchmark for 85% of the traffic over the 30 mph and asked how the information would be recorded. Would the information show the percentage of vehicles above the benchmark and could that information be used as a priority-setting tool? Mr. Mazzella said yes to both questions.

The member also asked how CTIP would incorporate the impact of the Lorig and Simon developments on access and curb cuts. Mr. Mazzella said that the Simon development would go through permitting so the impact should be clear. He said that Lorig would go through planning and some of the CTIP improvement suggestions could be on how to make the system work better. When asked how the Lorig, Simon and TOD projects, which were outside of CTIP, would be incorporated into CTIP, Mr. Mazzella said that all the data they generated would be incorporated into CTIP.

A member commented that he wanted the assumption that Sound Transit would get to Northgate around 2030 to be clear.

Next Steps for CTIP Advice

With respect to CTIP, Mr. Harrison said he had anticipated that the Group was further along in providing its advice than turned out to be the case. He said he would send an email and ask that the Group proceed with discussion and complete its advice on CTIP on February 24. He said that either SDOT could amend its report or the Group's advice could reflect areas where the Report does not reflect the Group's thinking.

Monorail System Planning

George Allen, manager of citywide outreach for the Monorail, introduced himself and Jonathan Dong, and gave a very brief overview of the Green Line which is expected to be completed by 2009. He said that it will begin at NE 85th in Ballard, run through downtown, go past the sports stadia, and end in West Seattle. He said the Monorail Board had set aside money in 2002 to look at how to integrate with King County/Metro and Sound Transit – to see itself as part of the whole transportation system. He said they wanted to look ahead to where the system would go next. He left information for members on the Green Line and on a second phase, with possible corridors to link with NSCC and the transit center, as part of

preliminary planning. He encouraged Stakeholders to fill out a questionnaire and provide their input.

Public Comment

Officer Jim Morgan, Seattle Police Department (SPD) and son of Stakeholder alternate Sandra Morgan, introduced himself. He said that SPD was unaware of all the changes that were coming to Northgate. He said that he personally was interested in being dedicated to serve on the group and encouraged members to call Captain Dan Oliva or the Mayor and request that he be detailed to the Group so that SPD would be included.

In response to a motion by a member to include Officer Morgan, the Vice Chair said this was an inappropriate action during the public comment period. Another member commented that Licton Springs was the only community to include security planning.

Another member asked Officer Morgan for information about possible changes expected at the Northgate precinct.

John Domer addressed the group and urged the members to take advantage of the opportunity to create the country's first true transit center. The system would be an underground subway. It would be an upgrade from the proposed light rail system, which he said would be slow, to a medium-rail regional rapid transit (65 mph) system, similar to the BART system in San Francisco. Such a system would go from Northgate to Lake City, to Kenmore, to Woodinville and then connect to the larger rail system.

Adjournment

Ms. Rupp adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Meeting Attendance

Representatives and Alternates of the **Northgate Stakeholders Group** in attendance were:

King County/Metro: Rep. Ron Posthuma

Simon Property Group: Rep. Gary Weber, Alt. Sam Stalin

Maple Leaf Community Council: Rep. Janice Camp, Alt. Mel Vannice

Licton Springs Community Council: Rep. Jerry Owens

Haller Lake Community Club: Rep. Velva Maye

Pinehurst Community Council: Rep. Lorna Mrachek

Victory Heights Community Council: Rep. Brad Cummings

Thornton Creek Alliance: Rep. John Lombard; Alt. Cheryl Klinker

Thornton Creek Legal Defense: Rep. Janet Way, Alt. Jan Brucker

Northgate Chamber of Commerce: Shaiza Damji

North Seattle Community College: Alt. Bruce Kieser

Northwest Hospital: Rep. Chris Roth

Senior Housing: Rep. Jeanne Hayden; Alt. Sandra Morgan

Businesses Outside the Mall: Rep. Michelle Rupp

Youth Seat: Rep. Amanda Doty

At-large: Rep. Shawn Oleson, Alt. Barbara Maxwell

At-large: Marilyn Firlotte

Members of the Triangle Associates facilitation team included David Harrison and Vicki King.